



# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE *109<sup>th</sup>* CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2005

## *Senate*

### IN MEMORIAM OF CLIFFORD BROWN

Mr. President, I would like to set aside a moment to reflect on the life of Clifford Brown. He would have celebrated his 75th birthday this past October 30. Clifford was a man who made a remarkable contribution toward the world of music by his soulful playing of the trumpet. He was a truly talented man who dedicated his life to music and his family.

Clifford was born on October 30, 1930, in Wilmington, DE. His father was a self-taught musician who kept several instruments around the house, including a bugle which young Clifford began playing at only 5 years old. He soon discovered the trumpet, which would change his life and the texture of jazz for all of eternity.

At the age of 12, Clifford's father arranged for him to study with esteemed local music teacher Robert Lowery, also from Wilmington. Under Robert's tutelage, Clifford began to display the promise of his ability and develop his own style of playing.

After studying with Mr. Lowery for 3 years, during which Clifford played in

his teacher's dance band, Clifford moved his music education to Howard High School where he met Harry Andrews, the school's band and choral director. Mr. Andrews taught Clifford how to blend the free-flowing harmonies of jazz with the classical lines of more traditional music. This experience allowed Clifford to develop his own sound, which would be the starting point for his journey to greatness within the jazz community. His tutelage at Howard High School culminated with Clifford playing "The Carnival of Venice" as his graduation solo, which would be remembered by all who attended the ceremony.

After graduation, Clifford obtained a music scholarship to study mathematics at the University of Delaware, which, at the time, did not have a music department. He later attended Maryland State College, where Clifford played and composed music for the college band. It was during this time that Clifford was to meet the other love of his life, LaRue Anderson.

At the time, Ms. Anderson was doing a study on the psychology of music and

had caught the eye of two future jazz greats, Charlie Parker and Max Roach, who were also acquaintances of Clifford Brown. Mr. Parker and Mr. Roach decided that Ms. Anderson and Clifford would make excellent companions, so they arranged for the two of them to meet. They met, fell in love, and later married.

After recovering from severe injuries due to a traffic accident, Clifford traveled to Europe in 1953 with Lionel Hampton and his big band. Despite contractual obligations, Clifford used his free time to record various solo and group projects, which would propel him to the next level of musical recognition. In 1954, Clifford teamed up with fellow jazz great Max Roach to form the Clifford Brown--Max Roach Quintet which was quickly recognized as one of the most formidable collections of contemporary jazz talent.

While touring the Nation with his quintet, Clifford Brown, who was only 25 years old at the time, died in a traffic accident on June 26, 1956. While the tragedy of his passing weighs heavy in our hearts, we are truly blessed that Clifford's musical genius survives in the sounds of modern jazz trumpeters everywhere. His widow LaRue Brown Watson passed away October 2, 2005.

It is difficult to refute that Clifford's rare combination of musical intelligence and immense emotional range changed the landscape of modern jazz forever. Fortunately for music lovers everywhere, Clifford's work has been immortalized on numerous recordings, almost any of which can be safely recommended as superior examples of what the jazz trumpet was meant to sound like. I rise today to commemorate Clifford Brown, his life, and his outstanding musical legacy.